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Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 3 October 1991, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. SHIHABI (Saudi Arabia)

later: Mr. AL-NI'MAH (Qatar)
(Vice-President)

- General debate [9] (continued)

Statements by

Mr. Gombosuren (Mongolia)
Mr. Sanoussi (Guinea)
Mr. Mbonimpa (Burundi)
Mr. Ould Didi (Mauritania)
Mr. Coore (Jamaica)
Mr. Katopola (Malawi)
Mr. Mocumbi (Mozambique)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. GOMBOSUREN (Mongolia) (interpretation from Russian): Sir, it is indeed a pleasure for me to extend to you my warm congratulations on your election to the high post of President of the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly, which is destined to play an important role in further improving the activities of our Organization.

We pay a tribute to your predecessor, Mr. Guido de Marco, the representative of Malta, for his dynamic leadership of the work of the last General Assembly session.

The Mongolian delegation expresses its deep satisfaction at the admission to the world Organization of seven new Member States, namely, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of Latvia, the Republic of Lithuania and the Republic of Estonia. We sincerely congratulate the representatives of these States.

Yet another year marked by the strengthening of positive trends in the world has passed - a year that stands out for events which will long serve us all as both a lesson and an impetus in the steady march towards a new world order based on general acceptance of universal values.

First of all I should like to allude to the Persian Gulf crisis. The aggression against Kuwait was undoubtedly a challenge to the entire world community, and it reacted to it in a fitting manner. The aggressor was stopped. In our opinion, the major lesson to be learned from the crisis was that the strong cannot defy with impunity the will of the weak and that the

(Mr. Gombosuren, Mongolia)

United Nations will no longer tolerate similar actions which flagrantly violate its Charter.

The outcome of the crisis, logical by all ethic and moral norms of inter-State relations, significantly reinforced the faith of nations in the feasibility of bringing into being a just world order. And this is very important, since in the world of today the weak outnumber the strong by far. It is not diktat that the weak need, but assistance and just and equitable cooperation on the part of the strong. This certainly does not diminish the significance of other legal norms and principles of inter-State relations. Such fundamental values as democracy, human rights, freedom of opinion and choice, among others, must be seen as basic criteria.

Secondly, the year 1991 has brought about promising results in the field of disarmament.

It was not long before the Soviet-American agreement on the elimination of medium and short-range nuclear missiles was concluded. And today it is already fully implemented. Moreover, both sides have worked out a new agreement on the substantial reduction of offensive strategic armaments. This is an important step along the path towards the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. The new initiatives by the President of the United States of America, George Bush, on the further reduction of nuclear weapons, in our view, open up far-reaching vistas in this area.

We welcome the decision by China, France and some other countries to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Encouraging progress has been made in the negotiations on the prohibition of chemical weapons, which, we hope, will lead to the elaboration of an appropriate agreement as early as next year.

(Mr. Gombosuren, Mongolia)

The Third Review Conference on the biological weapons Convention demonstrated the necessity to reaffirm and strengthen this important instrument.

Furthermore, the improvement in the international atmosphere in recent years is to be credited to a large extent to the Soviet perestroika and its policy of new thinking. Under its impact, events of historic significance have taken place, particularly in Eastern European countries. In the final analysis, they have brought the cold war to an end. Further improvement in international relations and solutions to urgent global problems will depend to a certain extent on the pace of Soviet perestroika. Therefore, practically the entire world community has a vested interest in its success. This is amply evidenced by the unanimous and almost universal condemnation of the August putsch in the Soviet Union. The putsch was a serious test both for the Soviet perestroika and for the still fragile trend towards accord on a global level. Perestroika withstood the test, and the cause of democracy and freedom has been defended through common effort. Perhaps this is one of the main lessons of the August events in the Soviet Union. Now that perestroika has embarked on a qualitatively new stage, even more encouraging prospects open up for global cooperation on all the pressing problems of today.

Thus, in the main, healthy trends dominate the political landscape of the planet, and the tendency of these processes is such that it leads us to believe that they are irreversible. This will certainly prove to be true under appropriate conditions and if efforts are made.

For many years now the Asian continent has been a region ridden with the most dangerous hotbeds of tension and conflict. However, the situation of late is being redressed. Recent dramatic changes in the world and the turn of events in Asia itself offer grounds for hope in the possibility of eliminating

(Mr. Gombosuren, Mongolia)

these hotbeds. An active search by the parties concerned, with the participation of the United Nations, is yielding tangible peacemaking results.

We welcome the emerging consensus on the convening of the Middle East peace conference, with the participation of all parties concerned. The time has come to put an end to the sufferings of the Palestinian people. Justice should be completely restored in all its aspects, taking into account the legitimate interests of all the countries of the region. It should be borne in mind that the events in the Persian Gulf have again clearly shown the danger of the unresolved situation prevailing in the Middle East.

As we see it, the tension on the Korean peninsula is somewhat lessening. There is a desire on the part of both sides to seek mutually acceptable solutions. This is evidenced by the simultaneous admission of the two Koreas to membership of the United Nations. We express the hope that this important step will facilitate the peaceful reunification of Korea, in accordance with the aspirations of its people.

(Mr. Gombosuren, Mongolia)

New, positive developments have taken place in the solution of the Cambodian problem. It is our hope that the forthcoming Paris International Conference in Paris will be crowned with success.

In tune with the times are the ongoing efforts to resolve the protracted Afghan crisis. In our opinion, the recent agreement between the Soviet Union and the United States to discontinue the supply of weapons to all Afghan sides has strong positive potential.

Mongolia attaches great importance to the strengthening of mutual understanding and trust in Asia, and has in the past offered some ideas towards this end. In particular, my Government put forward the possibility of regular dialogue between the countries of the northern part of Asia and the Pacific for the purpose of exchanging views on ways and means of finding optimal solutions to existing problems. There are many military-political, economic, ecological and other problems. One can say that the atmosphere in the region is far more conducive to the promotion of ideas in this field, including the idea concerning the establishment of a new world order.

In spite of the diverse mosaic of the Asian continent, with its many ethnic, religious, cultural and other differences, the Asian countries have many things in common. The solution of urgent problems of economic and social development and the degradation of the environment, as well as many others, requires active joint efforts. We believe that closer attention and better understanding are needed if the correlation between these common dilemmas is to be grasped and, on that basis, the search for new forms of wider and closer cooperation between the countries of Asia is to start.

There have been rapid changes for the better in the political climate of our planet, but we cannot say the same about international economic relations.

(Mr. Gombosuren, Mongolia)

Regrettably, there is no evidence of any substantial changes in that area.

The gap between "rich" and "poor" countries is growing. The problem of external debt is far from being resolved, although some limited steps are being taken in this direction. Protectionism and other unjust conditions of trade, as well as difficulties in gaining access to advanced technology: all these problems are putting a heavy burden on the overwhelming majority of developing countries. In the light of the need to resolve these problems, we see the importance of intensifying the efforts to give new impetus to the North-South dialogue.

In our view, the Declaration of the General Assembly at its eighteenth special session and the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade serve as an important basis for achieving the objective of establishing just and truly equal economic relations.

Today the problem of environment protection rightly occupies pride of place on the world agenda. We fully share the view that this problem cannot be divorced from that of development. In that context, the forthcoming United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, to be held in Brazil in 1992, should clarify many issues.

Mongolia is one of those countries where the Communist experiment has failed. For the second year now, the country is advancing along the path of profound political and economic reform. Significant progress has been achieved in the cause of democratization and the liberalization of social life in all its aspects. At present, the main task boils down to consolidating the democratic achievements and creating the legal and other prerequisites for ruling out the possibility of the revival of the old order. In this respect, great importance is being attached to the drafting of a new constitution, whose adoption is scheduled for November this year.

(Mr. Gombosuren, Mongolia)

The Government is taking energetic steps to put the country on the rails of a market economy. A great many acts have been drafted and enacted for the purpose of securing the legal basis for the development of market relations. The process of privatizing State property is gaining momentum. The prices of goods and services have, in general, been liberalized. A new banking system has been introduced. A stock exchange is being established. Favourable conditions are being created for the private sector - private enterprise, and so forth.

However, the resolution of economic problems is facing enormous difficulties of an objective as well as a subjective nature. The old system of economic relations is collapsing, but the new one has not yet been shaped. The same is true of our foreign economic relations. All these factors have slowed down production, have led to an increase in unemployment and excessive inflation, and have had other negative consequences.

The country is experiencing an acute shortage of financial resources. In particular, this gives rise to serious difficulties in supplying the population with food and consumer goods, and industry with raw materials and spare parts. A near-total lack of the qualified personnel required to carry out economic reforms both in management and in organization, as well as in technology, poses a very serious problem.

Unfortunately we are not in a position to solve these problems on our own; we have to seek outside assistance. I should say that we are already receiving such assistance from Japan, the United States and other countries. In the near future, credits will be provided by the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, which Mongolia joined this year.

(Mr. Gombosuren, Mongolia)

Such assistance and credits will be of great help in solving pressing problems. But that is not the end of the matter. We also regard this as an expression of effective support for our democratic reforms.

In this context, I should like, on behalf of the Mongolian Government, to express deep gratitude to all those who have given our reforms firm moral, political, material and other support.

While tackling the urgent tasks of today, we are at the same time laying down the foundations for tomorrow's development. From this point of view, the development of cooperation with other States is of great importance, and our foreign policy is directed towards this end. Today Mongolian foreign policy is completely cleared of the ideological components that until recently had a strong impact on it.

The Mongolian People's Republic is willing to develop equal, mutually beneficial relations with all countries, on the basis of respect for sovereignty, free choice of social development, and non-interference in the internal affairs of each other. We shall exert every effort to further strengthen our all-round close ties with our two great neighbours - the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China.

Mongolia is open to expansion of its relations with the developed countries in various fields. Today we can say that a good start has been made in certain directions. In general, a lot has to be done to reveal and take advantage of mutual opportunities to develop relations.

(Mr. Gombosuren, Mongolia)

We will further strengthen our solidarity with the developing countries and continue to cooperate with them in resolving our common tasks and problems. It is precisely for this reason that Mongolia recently joined the Non-Aligned Movement. In so doing, we also were proceeding from the premise that the historic mission of the Movement is far from being completed and that its positive role in international affairs will continue to endure.

This year will mark the thirtieth anniversary since the admission of the Mongolian People's Republic to the United Nations. During these years, Mongolia has endeavoured to make its contribution to United Nations efforts towards maintaining peace and strengthening international understanding and cooperation. I should like to mention here that on my country's initiative important documents on such issues as the right of peoples to peace, Disarmament Week, to foster the objectives of disarmament, and International Literacy Year, as well as on a number of other issues relating to social and economic development, have been adopted by the United Nations and the organizations in its system.

It is important to emphasize here that for us the United Nations is no longer an arena of ideological rivalry and confrontation. We see in it a genuine centre for harmonizing and coordinating the actions of nations in the attainment of common goals. The Mongolian delegation holds that the proposals put forward by the representatives of various countries in favour of improving this Organization merit the most careful and thorough consideration.

We join in the words of gratitude that the representatives of many countries have addressed to the Secretary-General,
Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, who will before long have accomplished his mission in that office. His activities in that post have been marked by a

(Mr. Gombosuren, Mongolia)

constant and visionary search and by creative initiative, and are truly deserving of our high commendation.

Mr. SANOUSSI (Guinea) (interpretation from French): First of all, let me convey to the representatives present at this sesson the warmest congratulations of the people and Government of Guinea, and of His Excellency General Lansana Conté, the President of the Republic.

I should also like to say how happy my delegation is to see you elected to the presidency of this forty-sixth session; we would express to you our conviction that, thanks to your great qualities and diplomatic experience, our work will be very successful. To that end, I assure you of the full cooperation of my delegation towards the success of your difficult and important mission.

Your predecessor, Mr. Guido de Marco, Foreign Minister and Deputy Prime Minister of Malta, deserves our tribute for the serenity, efficiency and ability with which he presided over the work of the forty-fifth session.

I should also like to convey to Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, Secretary-General of the Organization, the great appreciation and gratitude of the Government of the Republic of Guinea for his self-sacrificing devotion to international peace and security. I take this opportunity to tell him how greatly my people appreciated the message of peace and friendship he brought to us when he visited Conakry from 6 to 8 June last.

The recent admission of seven new Members bears witness to the universality of this Organization and will certainly make our Organization more dynamic as it works towards its purposes. Thus, we should like to welcome the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Republic of Korea, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands and the Baltic republics of Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia.

(Mr. Sanoussi, Guinea)

This session is opening onto a new era marked by the disappearance of the bipolarization of the world which for so long had been an obstacle to progress in international relations. Since late in 1989, the world has witnessed many events which made obsolete the old political and legal structures whose fragility made them unable to stand up to the will of the peoples to determine their own futures and impose respect for human rights as the basis of human society.

There are many lessons to be drawn from these events, both in terms of social thought and of political practice. While the advent of this new era gives grounds for great hopes in some parts of the world, it also gives rise to some concern in other parts which are being shaken by waves of violence and by massacres, which could well make the peace rather precarious.

In this new context, the international community must, first of all, try to eliminate all danger of war, particularly nuclear war. Here, my delegation welcomes and encourages the recent American initiatives in the area of disarmament. Next, the international community must extend the spirit of cooperation into all areas, particularly those of economic relations and the solving of social problems. Lastly, it must work to ensure the primacy of law in international affairs and of respect for human rights and the rights of peoples.

The current process of democratization is perceived everywhere as an obvious sign of a basic change, the result of which will be justice, social stability and greater prosperity. This process, if it is to be effective and take root, must recognize the historical, social and cultural realities of the countries involved. Imposing any kind of blueprint or stereotype will only jeopardize the efforts being made by societies to develop themselves and will hold back the development of the individual.

(Mr. Sanoussi, Guinea)

In the Republic of Guinea, our recent adoption of our Basic Law - the Constitution - reduces the gap between the aspirations of the people and reality, and gives every citizen the means to express himself freely and to liberate himself. The gradual disengagement of the State from the industrial and commercial sectors, the encouragement of private initiative, the promotion of individual ownership, and the creation of conditions for social stability, unity and national cohesion are at the heart of the changes now under way in my country.

However, experience has shown that achieving democratic objectives in African countries does not happen quietly and without challenge. Unfortunately, the will for democratization is coming up against difficulties deriving from the implementation of structural adjustment policies which - and this is a point I should emphasize - are not enjoying the support we expected from the donors. That this should be so is worsening the deprivation and the feeling of frustration experienced by our peoples, and so our States are becoming increasingly dependent on international institutions and bilateral partners.

My Government is aware of these possible pitfalls, and has therefore been working for a peaceful transition, during which a national transitional council has been set up to prepare organic laws to govern the constitutional institutions which are provided for in our Basic Law and which should operate according to the principle of the separation of powers. The transitional period will end in December 1991. Then, next year, the democratic institutions provided for in the Basic Law will start to live and breathe as political parties start up, the legislative bodies are formed, and the Supreme Court is installed.

(Mr. Sanoussi, Guinea)

In Africa, even though Nambia's accession to independence has had a salutary effect on the situation in southern Africa, the dismantling of apartheid is still coming up against difficulties because of the survival of the intrinsic structures of the anachronistic system there and the persistence of political violence.

(Mr. Sanoussi, Guinea)

Nevertheless, significant progress has been made by the De Klerk Government, which promises an aupicious atmosphere for the negotiations. The objectives of the Programme of Action adopted at the sixteenth special session of the General Assembly, in December 1989, are valid today.

On the question of Western Sahara, my Government welcomes the Secretary-General's efforts and the entry into force of the cease-fire, which will enable the United Nations to give practical effect to its peace plan.

Now more than ever before, peace in the Middle East and the Palestinian problem are the focus of the international community's attention. Indeed, the Gulf War gave rise to some hope for an overall settlement of the Middle East crisis. The Guinean Government is convinced that action by the international community, supported by the spirit of compromise of all the parties involved, is absolutely essential to the success of the imminent international peace conference. All this notwithstanding, recognition of the rights of all parties is the only path towards a just, comprehensive and lasting solution of this crisis, which has been a source of concern to the international community for so long.

My delegation welcomes the positive developments in the settlement of the Cambodian conflict. These developments are at the heart of the national reconciliation reached through the establishment of the Supreme National Council headed by Prince Norodom Sihanouk. Happily, this situation augurs well for an end to a long era of hostilities and suffering for the peoples of that subregion.

The recent agreements between the United States of America and the Soviet Union constitute remarkable progress towards general and complete disarmament. But the persistence of some hotbeds of tension and the

(Mr. Sanoussi, Guinea)

proliferation of civil wars here and there make any hopes for ultimate peace still hypothetical.

In my delegation's view, the establishment of a moral and political climate aimed at the complete elimination of all weapons is still a categorical imperative. Limiting military expenditures and budgets will certainly have an immeasurably positive effect on the economic and social development of many regions of the world.

A study of the international situation shows that the ideological and military confrontation between East and West no longer constitutes a threat of world or regional tension; but there remain many economic and social imbalances between North and South. In this respect, the economies of the countries of the South remain weakened by the dizzying drop in commodity prices, the burden of debt servicing, meagre support for structural adjustment policies, and the paucity of financial resources. For Africa in particular, external debt remains a problem whose scope and gravity impose certain requirements that the international community will have to face in the short term decisively and globally. My delegation therefore endorses the recommendations of the eighteenth special session of the General Assembly, in April 1990, on the relaunching of growth and development in the developing countries. Similarly, my country supports the Secretary-General's initiative on the holding of a conference on the financing of development. We also support the Japanese Government's proposal to host an international conference on African development

Today more than ever before, questions of the relationship between man and nature arise with increasing urgency. Almost two decades ago, the United Nations sounded the alarm in respect of the threat by human activities to the

(Mr. Sanoussi, Guinea)

ecological well-being of our planet. The awareness of a planetary heritage has aroused powerful solidarity among nations with a view to making a concerted effort to ensure that future generations will inherit a healthier planet where man can live in perfect harmony with his ecosystem. My Government therefore supports the holding of the international Conference on Environment and Development in Brazil in 1992.

Changes in all areas of human and social life entail some negative effects, such as drug abuse, narcotics trafficking and crime. The disintegration of basic social structures and the disparities between town and country, which lead to exodus from rural areas, leave the individual almost defenceless against the pressures and temptations of the big city and thus bring about the violent social disruptions that continue to plague some third-world countries.

In that respect, my country welcomes the decision by the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session to make 1994 the International Year of the Family as the natural basis for life in society and a factor for the development and support of the individual. Hence, the convening in 1995 of a world conference on women would form part of the strategy to combat social ills. As to the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, we in Guinea regard it as the expression of the international community's will to strengthen multilateral cooperation on behalf of children.

I cannot fail to refer here to the mass exodus caused by the Liberian crisis, a tragic example of the effects of political upheavals within a State and a subregion. The serious economic, political and social problems resulting from that crisis affect all countries of the subregion. In Guinea, the sudden massive influx of almost 500,000 refugees has caused economic,

(Mr. Sanoussi, Guinea)

environmental, housing, health and hygiene problems. The crisis, which plunged Liberia into genocide and caused enormous material devastation, can be resolved only if all the political viewpoints involved are represented in a joint national effort to put an end to the people's suffering and wandering. Here I would salute and encourage the efforts made and still being made by the countries of the subregion to deal with that crisis. Lastly, I would make another urgent appeal to the international community on behalf of my Government for medium- and long-term assistance for the Liberian refugees and the peoples that so generously took them in.

The great changes that have taken place this year at the political and social levels, which have basically altered the geopolitical shape of our planet, can be attributed to the constructive role played by our world Organization in the thawing of regional conflicts and in the struggle for a more just, prosperous and democratic world. A new context for international relations is being born, the context of a new civilization whose values will be freedom, democracy, dialogue, cooperation and peace.

Mr. MBONIMPA (Burundi) (interpretation from French): I have the honour, Mr. President, of conveying to you a message of peace, friendship and solidarity from His Excellency Major Pierre Buyoya, President of the Central Committee of the UPRONA Party and President of the Republic of Burundi.

I should also like to express to you, on behalf of the Government of Burundi, my warmest and most sincere congratulations on your election to the presidency of the Assembly. With your diplomatic experience and your devotion to the ideals of peace and international cooperation, there can be no doubt that our deliberations will be crowned with success. By electing you to the presidency of the General Assembly, the international community has placed

(Mr. Mbonimpa, Burundi)

its trust in you and in your country, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, with which my country has excellent relations. I can assure you that my delegation will give you every support to ensure that your noble mission is discharged to the satisfaction of the entire international community.

(Mr. Mbonimpa, Burundi)

I want also to congratulate the other members of the Bureau who, I am certain, will do all they can to help you carry out your weighty responsibilities.

We convey our appreciation and gratitude to your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Guido de Marco of Malta, who presided over the work of the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly with great ability, dynamism and devotion. He was a credit to the United Nations and to his country.

Finally, I convey my sincere thanks to the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, for his untiring and successful efforts to preserve world peace and security.

The Republic of Burundi joins other delegations in congratulating and welcoming the new members of the United Nations family: the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republics of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

In our view, the simultaneous admission of the two Koreas will not mark the end of work towards the reunification of the Korean nation, which has already progressed far in that direction. We may hope that in the near future we shall be present here at the culmination of those reunification efforts, and that the dream of the fraternal people of Korea will finally come true.

Before stating my country's views on some of the items of concern to the international community at large, I want briefly to describe the current situation in Burundi.

Since 3 September 1987, the Government of the Third Republic has been pursuing its goal: the restoration of national unity, social justice and

(Mr. Mbonimpa, Burundi)

development for all in the context of a genuine democracy. As I have said before from this rostrum, the people of Burundi want to live in peace, order and tranquillity. We want our country to be safe for all; we want a country of unity, from which hatred and vengeance are forever banished.

As members know very well, national unity is the vanguard and cornerstone of all progress. The Government of Burundi continues to match its words with deeds by adopting concrete measures to strengthen national unity and reconciliation.

The formation of a Government of National Unity; the creation of a National Commission to study national unity; the establishment of a National Security Council; and the massive repatriation of refugees: all these are incontrovertible facts that prove the wish of the Government of the Third Republic to build a just, democratic and prosperous society.

Thanks to the policy of dialogue and cooperation that marks the political activities of President Buyoya and his Government, the people of Burundi adopted the Charter of National Unity by 89.21 per cent of the vote. The adoption of that Charter, on 5 February 1991, was a victory over the forces of division, selfishness and injustice. The people of Burundi have thus rejected division; they have rejected the law of the jungle, hatred and all forms of exclusion. That Charter will provide the foundation for the institutions to be established in our country.*

Having reached this important stage on the road to unity, the people of Burundi are now democratizing their political life. The Consitutional Commission set up on 21 March 1991 has just submitted its report emphasizing

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* Mr. Al-Ni'mah (Qatar), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Mbonimpa, Burundi)

the values that democracy can promote, addressing political pluralism and proposing basic State institutions, their organization and their functioning. To indicate that unity must remain the basis of democracy, the Commission proposed the creation of a National Council of Unity and the retention as permanent institutions of the National Security Council and the Economic and Social Council.

The Constitutional Commission will be organizing and encouraging debate throughout the country to enable the people to express their views on the proposed institutions. The constitution of the Republic of Burundi will be approved in a referendum early in 1992.

The future constitution of Burundi will bolster the policy of national unity and respect for human rights, a policy the Government has been following for four years. That policy was manifested in the ratification of international human rights agreements and the African Charter of Human Rights and the Rights of Peoples.

A meaningful policy of national unity cannot neglect the question of refugees. For that reason, the Government has made all the necessary arrangements and has created conditions favourable to the voluntary repatriation of Burundi refugees. More than 10,000 refugees have already returned and have taken up residence, and others continue to come.

The United Republic of Tanzania, which for some time has given shelter to the vast majority of our refugees, contributed to a final solution when on 28 August 1991, with Burundi and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, it signed an agreement establishing a working group to promote final solutions to the problem of Burundi refugees in Tanzania. We

(Mr. Mbonimpa, Burundi)

greatly appreciate the friendly and brotherly action of the United Republic of Tanzania, which has promised to grant Tanzanian nationality to Burundi refugees who for one reason or another have chosen to live permanently in that country. Thus there will be no further talk of Burundi refugees in Tanzania.

There has been a surge in the Burundi people's solidarity with their brothers and sisters who have returned to the motherland. I am pleased to inform the Assembly that the week of 10 to 18 August 1991 was declared the Week of Solidarity with Burundi Refugees. In that connection, the people supplied food, clothing and construction materials, not to mention financial assistance.

But the needs remain enormous, and any contribution from the international community will be welcome. We take this opportunity sincerely to thank the friendly countries, international organizations and private donors who have provided support for our work.

Despite the courageous policy of economic reform followed since 1986 with the support of the Bretton Woods institutions - the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund - and other funding sources, and despite the fact that some encouraging results have been achieved, my country still faces serious economic problems. Essentially, these are linked to the plunge in coffee prices and to the fact that Burundi is landlocked. It is to find solutions to those economic problems that Burundi's Economic and Social Council has sought to devise ways and means to achieve harmonious development. Its proposals are now the subject of widespread national debate. The Government is trying to make the population aware of the imbalance between population and resources resulting from the demographic explosion.

(Mr. Mbonimpa, Burundi)

My Government is putting together a nationwide campaign to show that a vigorous birth-control policy is vital if we want to continue to feed our people and ensure its development.

Despite the high priority we attach to our domestic policies, our country is not shut up in an ivory tower; it continues to be open to the world. We are convinced that this is the era of interdependence and solidarity among nations, regions and peoples. For four years Burundi has been working to build foreign-relations policies based on trust, dialogue and cooperation.

(Mr. Mbonimpa, Burundi)

There can be no doubt that we are now at a decisive, historic stage, where all our efforts should be focused to consolidate and make irreversible all the positive trends that have been seen, so that relations between States acquire a new dimension. The new dynamic that is now a feature of international relations, which have been freed of the burden of the cold war, offer great hope of stability and open up prospects of peace, understanding and cooperation. They have made it possible for our Organization and the Secretary-General to contribute in a masterly way to taking specific initiatives to settle a number of conflicts that have gone on for too long.

Lasting solutions have been found to some conflicts that have gone on for many years. Examples include Angola, Lebanon and Cambodia. Real peace efforts have been made elsewhere. The successful missions that have already been carried out and the renewed trust in our Organization give genuine grounds for satisfaction and above all for hope. It is my country's desire that all those involved in conflict will rediscover the virtues of dialogue and cooperation, which are the only weapons that can bring about peace.

In speaking about conflicts in certain countries, I cannot fail to refer to the conflict raging in Rwanda, a friendly neighbouring country linked to mine by solid geographical, historical and cultural ties. In economic matters Rwanda and Burundi are complementary countries. Moreover, they belong to the same regional groups, such as the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries (CEPGL), the Organization for the Management and Development of the Kagera River Basin (KBO) and the Eastern Southern African Preferential Trade Area (PTA). For all those reasons, Burundi has taken part in all the meetings held to seek a lasting solution to the crisis in Rwanda and we continue to be concerned about the continuing armed confrontation, which is causing loss of human life and the destruction of Rwanda's economic potential.

(Mr. Mbonimpa, Burundi)

We make an urgent appeal to the parties to the conflict to respect the cease-fire agreement signed in N'Sele on 29 March this year and without delay to embark on negotiations to find a lasting solution. We repeat our commitment to support any action promoting the return of peace to that brotherly country.

We have been following with great interest the steps taken by the South African Government to abolish segregationist laws in South Africa, and we urge that Government to pursue its negotiations with the anti-apartheid movements with a view to eliminating the apartheid system once and for all. Burundi believes that remarkable efforts are needed, and if they are to be successful the understanding and support of the whole international community will be required. My delegation sincerely appeals to the entire people of South Africa to unite to gain this victory, for which a great deal of courage and restraint are needed.

We are convinced that peace is possible in the Middle East if the parties to the conflict agree to get together round the negotiating table. Burundi therefore hopes that an international conference on the Middle East will be organized so that the peoples of the region may live in peace. The Palestinian people are entitled to a homeland, a sovereign State, within secure and internationally recognized borders. That is why my country supports and encourages all the initiatives to restore peace between the Palestinian and Israeli peoples.

The eyes of all of us are now focused on the forthcoming international peace conference, for which the United States Secretary of State, Mr. James Baker, has been working tirelessly, not without difficulties, to come up with a formula acceptable to all the parties concerned. My delegation

(Mr. Mbonimpa, Burundi)

hopes that those efforts will be crowned with success. A sine qua non for success continues to be open cooperation and the commitment of all the parties concerned.

The Gulf crisis once again demonstrated the fragility of peace in that tragic part of the world. The invasion of Kuwait, followed by Kuwait's annexation by Iraq, was an act of aggression condemned by the whole international community. International law had been violated. All countries, however powerful, must respect the territorial integrity of other States, refrain from intervening in the internal affairs of other States and avoid recourse to the use of force to settle disputes. The invasion and occupation of small States cannot be tolerated in today's world.

The mobilization caused by the Gulf crisis in defence of international law should continue in defence of human rights and the rights of peoples, wherever they are violated. Following a policy of double standards in similar situations can only mean the death of international law, as Mr. François Mitterrand, President of the French Republic, said here last year. I have outlined a challenge that must be accepted, because it is the only way to restore peace to the region.

We also appeal to our friends in Yugoslavia to have the necessary political courage to get round the negotiating table, with the help of mediators, to restore peace swiftly to their country.

Apart from the problems to which I have referred, Africa has now embarked on an important stage of its history involving the democratization of its institutions. However, democracy that does not have a sound economic base is only a mirage, condemned to failure from its very birth.

(Mr. Mbonimpa, Burundi)

Africa, like the rest of the world which has embarked on this course, therefore needs a great deal of careful attention and more support so that it, too, can write its name on a page of the history of democracy.

The United Nations, which can congratulate itself on having been in the vanguard in world events recently, has recovered its former prestige, and its moral authority is growing daily. It is playing a major role in guiding the international community towards political harmony and economic and social progress.

We must also be aware that development and peace - in effect, the security whose creation and development are a task of our Organization - are inseparable from disarmament, which is the instrument for bringing them about rather than the end product.

The Government of Burundi welcomes the recent initiative by the United States President, Mr. George Bush, who has just announced important disarmament measures. We hope that the other nuclear Powers will follow that example and that this step will be followed by others, eventually leading to complete disarmament.

A very positive factor for disarmament is that the concept of security has today been broadened and that its non-military aspects - political stability, respect for human rights, the legitimacy of governments, people's living conditions, the environment and so on - have become more and more important and are linked.

Success in this area would free sufficient funds to enable the United Nations to carry out the work of peace and security, which cannot be dissociated from the other responsibilities conferred upon it by the Charter. Here I refer to the improvement of living conditions throughout the world, particularly by organizing equitable international economic relations.

(Mr. Mbonimpa, Burundi)

We are concerned about the real danger that the flow of development finance will dry up. At present the demand for outside capital is greater than the supply, because of the needs of the economies of Eastern Europe and of a changing Soviet Union.

My delegation has already had an opportunity to take careful note of the reassuring declarations made by aid-donor countries and organizations to the effect that the developing countries will continue to receive the same amount of financing. We welcome the position of the Group of 7, the seven most industrialized countries, taken at their last summit meeting, and we urge all the decision-makers in that important group of countries to demonstrate their active solidarity with the countries of the South.

In doing that, we dare to hope that words will be matched by deeds, particularly at this time, when Africa faces enormous dangers of marginalization. We therefore support the idea of an international conference on finance for development, which was suggested by the Secretary-General in Geneva during the recent session of the Economic and Social Council.

(Mr. Mbonimpa, Burundi)

This conference, whose purpose would be, inter alia, to identify sources of possible financing and to devise machinery which would make it possible to allocate the necessary resources to a growth and development programme, must be seriously prepared for if we are to achieve concrete results.

The debt crisis, which we have been deploring for so many years now, unfortunately remains acute. The various proposals and initiatives made with a view to coping with this problem have not yet achieved any tangible results. On the contrary, the developing countries in general and Africa in particular are becoming more and more enmeshed in this crisis. Although certain countries may have benefited from various measures providing for debt cancellation, relief or rescheduling, the moment seems to have come to take courageous global and pragmatic steps towards all the debtor countries of the developing world.

Nevertheless, as recently acknowledged by the Secretary-General, the situation in Africa, and particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, requires even bolder steps and exceptional treatment with respect to official and semi-official debt, as well as private and commercial and multilateral debt. Therefore, we give full support to his proposals with a view to reducing or cancelling those types of indebtedness.

In another area, the final examination and evaluation of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, has just taken place at the Headquarters of our Organization. One of the merits of that exercise has been to demonstrate that however fine and clearly drawn an economic programme may be, it cannot achieve anything unless it is adequately financed. The causes of the failure of the Programme of Action have been diagnosed, as were the future prospects of the African economy

(Mr. Mbonimpa, Burundi)

for 1991 and beyond. My delegation hopes that the new framework for international economic cooperation initiated to this end will benefit from more commitment on the part of the donor countries so as to guarantee a greater mobilization of funds for Africa.

We welcome the Japanese initiative to host the International Conference on the Development of Africa, to be held in Japan in 1993, with the participation of African Heads of State. My country hopes that the meeting preceding that Conference which is to be held in Japan next year will be very carefully prepared.

Despite the uncertainty which besets the world economy and the risks of marginalization of the African continent from international economic trade, it is unthinkable that the peoples and Governments affected by the crisis will yield to discouragement. At present, a large number of developing countries, including my own, are experimenting with structural adjustment programmes. The results of these economic reforms are still limited and their social cost remains high.

Also with a view to relaunching economic growth and integration in the African continent, our Heads of State and Government, at a summit meeting in Abuja, Nigeria, from 3 to 5 June 1991, signed a Treaty establishing the African Economic Community. We therefore appeal to the international community to contribute increased aid for the achievement of this goal.

We consider the problems of underdevelopment and poverty to be among the causes of conflicts which pose a threat to international peace and security. Furthermore, we believe that without peace it is impossible to strive for development, and without the development of the peoples of the developing countries it is impossible to conceive of an honourable and real peace, valid for all.

(Mr. Mbonimpa, Burundi)

Africa, which occupies one quarter of the Earth's surface and which at the beginning of the next century will have one fifth of the world's population, deserves particular attention. Sooner or later these enormous problems will affect all mankind. A world which disregards a continent with such a potential will be an impoverished world for ever.

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development will be held in a few months in Rio de Janeiro, but I should like to express my country's appreciation of the efforts already made by the Committee preparing for this important meeting. We hope that the results of what has already been termed "the summit of the planet Earth" will meet the great expectations that our planet will be safeguarded and that the main concerns of the developing countries will be duly taken into account.

At a time when we can glimpse on the horizon the prospects of a peaceful world rid of the engines of mass destruction, my country hopes that thousands of human beings threatened by famine, poverty and sickness will begin to have some hope that this world of peace will also be theirs - that is, that we shall have a world of active solidarity. It is world peace which is at stake. This is perhaps the greatest challenge faced by our Organization.

Mr. OULD DIDI (Mauritania) (interpretation from Arabic): On behalf of the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, I should like to congratulate warmly Ambassador Shihabi on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly. His election did not occur by mere chance. It reflects recognition of his outstanding qualities and is a mark of the respect in which his sister country, Saudi Arabic, is held in the international arena. I am sure that with his experience and abilities, the work of the forty-sixth

(Mr. Ould Didi, Mauritania)

session of the General Assembly will be guided efficiently and ably. I should like to assure him of our full cooperation in his important and difficult mission.

I should like to express once again the appreciation of our delegation to his predecessor, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Malta, His Excellency Mr. Guido de Marco, for the most able manner in which he presided over the work of the last session.

We should also like to draw attention to the continuing work for peace of the Secretary-General of our Organization, His Excellency Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar. We once again assure him of our full cooperation and commend him most warmly.

We also welcome the delegation of Cambodia, led by His Royal Highness Prince Norodom Sihanouk. We trust that the process of reconciliation and dialogue which has been begun will soon, under his leadership, result in peace in that country which we hold so dear.

(Mr. Ould Didi, Mauritania)

Admission to the United Nations of the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is indeed an important event and we trust that this will encourage those two friendly States to pursue their dialogue with a view to achieving the unification of the country.

The presence here among us today of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania indeed demonstrates that they have regained their sovereignty and we extend to them a warm welcome. We also welcome the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia. This will no doubt enhance the universality of our Organization as almost all the inhabitants of the world now adhere to its principles and work in line with its objectives.

Many events have taken place in the world since our last session. Some of those events are cause for hope, while others are signs of danger. Peoples' aspiration after freedom and democracy became stronger while ideological antagonisms receded. However, the Gulf crisis and the persistence of many hotbeds of tension and events now under way in Eastern Europe show the limits of the changes and the problems that they can generate.

We do of course welcome greater cooperation between the major Powers, the progress of democracy and the disappearance of ideological barriers. But all these achievements, regardless of their importance, cannot bear fruit outside some framework of justice that disregards particularistic approaches and vested interests.

In the Middle East, the oppressed people of Palestine still suffer under the yoke of occupation. A solution must be found to the problem. But one cannot conceive of any solution without the participation of the Palestinian people whose representative is the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), or

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without full respect for their inalienable right to establish their own State in the land of Palestine.

The Islamic Republic of Mauritania supports the holding of an international peace conference on the Middle East and welcomes the initiatives that are being taken in this respect.

In the Gulf region, the crisis has caused enormous human and material destruction. The war has left the entire region devastated. While we share the joy of the people of Kuwait, who have regained sovereignty over their territory, we cannot ignore the tragedy of the people of Iraq who are deprived of food and medicine, regardless of the recommendations of missions sent by the United Nations.

In Western Sahara, current developments augur well for an imminent end to the fratricidal conflict there. The cease-fire agreement of 6 September 1991 and the setting up of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) side by side with the goodwill of the parties concerned, should lead to peace in the subregion - peace that will certainly make a significant contribution to the building of the greater Maghreb. We, for our part, will spare no effort in supporting the peace process that has been initiated by the United Nations. The United Nations may rest assured of our full support.

In South Africa, we follow with great interest the development of the situation and hope that this augurs well for the future of the region.

In Angola, we welcome the peace agreement which was signed on 31 May 1991 between the Government of the People's Republic of Angola and the National

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Union for the Total Independence of Angola. We welcome the spirit of constructive cooperation which led to the agreement and hope to see the sons of Angola tackling together the difficult task of reconstruction and development in their country.

In Liberia, as a result of African wisdom, a return to calm has begun. The efforts of the Community of West African States have encouraged the brothers who were divided to sit down together at the negotiating table. We hope that that spirit of fraternity and concord will soon be translated into a permanent peace and a return to normality in the country.

We, for our part, have begun discussions with our brothers in Senegal so as to move ahead from the serious events which disrupted the region in 1989 and which led to so much human suffering. We hope to open a new chapter in our relations where tension and suspicion will yield to a serene relationship based on history, geography and human ties.

In Asia and in Latin America, the will and the resolve of governments have made possible the resolution of numerous conflicts. Last July the first Ibero-American Summit held in Guadalajara, with the participation of Spain, Portugal and Latin American countries, provided a new framework for concerted action and cooperating, and we hope that this new forum will help to strengthen peace in the world.

In Afghanistan, we continue to follow the developments of the situation. We regret that, despite the agreement signed three years ago, and the withdrawal of foreign troops, peace has not yet returned to the people of Afghanistan.

In Cyprus, hopes raised through the mediation of the Secretary-General are slow to take the form of a final and lasting peace agreement. We invite

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the parties to the conflict to continue a constructive dialogue with a view to finding a solution to the problem that would bring security and social justice to all the component parts of the Cypriot people.

Today, while we have grounds for welcoming some positive tendencies towards the resolution of political problems, we still feel greatly concerned over the worsening economic and social situation of more than two thirds of the human race. That already difficult situation has been aggravated by the consequences of the Gulf war which consumed or diverted considerable resources which were intended for development aid.

The increasing number of international forums where development problems are discussed has not improved the situation. Rather, it has brought about more frustration and disappointment. Bilateral aid continues to fall and it is increasingly tied to the acceptance of concepts and models offered by the donors with the resulting danger of simply neglecting the cultural and socio-economic features and traits of the recipients. The international financing institutions are increasingly adding to the constraints that they impose and also the area in which they have to operate has become larger with the changes in Eastern Europe. Yet there has been no increase in the resources available to them. However, despite all this, we are optimistic and hope that the developing countries will see their demands acceded to in respect of debt relief, fair prices for commodities, free access to the markets of the industrialized countries and an increase in development aid.

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Africa, more than any other continent, is in the grip of an unprecedented economic crisis, at a time when social and political changes are freeing the energies of its peoples and creating conditions that are more favourable for development. Unless our economies are revived, we may only expect serious human plights such as hunger, internal disruption and inter-State disputes. At the continental level, awareness of the situation was reflected at the summit meeting of the Organization of African Unity in Abuja, when it adopted the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community, for the economic integration of the continent.

The economic situation of the developing countries, particularly of African countries, makes it essential to seek solutions that would enable our countries to provide internal resources and to have new means made available to them for the desired economic takeoff. If nothing is done in that direction, structural adjustment programmes and measures will simply worsen the situation of the poorest nations without giving them any assurance of a better future.

The industrialized countries have shown that they can mobilize their resources at will. They did that when they wanted to encourage change in Eastern Europe and when they wanted to deal with the Gulf crisis. Improvement in the international climate and arms limitation have made it possible to make more resources available for peaceful development. In this connection, we welcome President Bush's initiative to give a new impetus to general disarmament. We hope the rich countries will adopt an effective policy that aims at supporting development with a view to creating a better world and achieving fairer distribution of the world's wealth. If this is not done, the fears expressed in 1990 by the Secretary-General will indeed come true. He

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warned that progress at the political level may prove illusory if we cannot respond to the aspirations for prosperity for the overwhelming majority of the world's population.

The continuing degradation of the environment is a source of concern for the human race as a whole. It requires concerted action by all countries, based on their abilities and their respective responsibilities. Environmental protection must be seen as an integral part of development efforts.

My country, which has been affected by desertification and the adverse consequences of that phenomenon, attaches the greatest importance to environmental issues. We welcome the convening next June of the conference in Rio de Janeiro, which will deal with this issue.

My country, the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, suffers from the impact of the world crisis, which has been aggravated by such natural disasters as drought, desertification and locusts. Despite these difficulties, our people, under the leadership of our President, Mr. Maaouya Ould Sid Ahmed Taya, are standing firm, and we are constantly working towards achievements, which have been recognized by our development partners.

While we do indeed deplore the world economic situation, we also welcome the progress made in many countries in the areas of democracy and freedom. The Islamic Republic of Mauritania, true to the commitments of its Political Directorate, has furthered the democratic process launched in 1986 with the establishment of the municipalities. A new Constitution was adopted by referendum, and new laws are being promulgated on political associations and freedom of the press. These developments lead to the creation of the best possible conditions for the full exercise of political rights by all citizens without distinction.

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We have promulgated laws granting amnesty for all political crimes and offences or offences relating to domestic or external State security issues, over the period from 1960 to the present. We have thus tried to encourage everyone to participate in national construction. The next stage will involve the organization of free, multi-party presidential and legislative elections.

In addition to this progress achieved on the path to democracy, we are pursuing our struggle against illiteracy, which we hope to eradicate completely by the year 2000.

Emancipation of women and child care are other important aspects of our national policy. Many measures have been taken in this area, and they have been hailed by all the organizations involved in these issues.

I should like to take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks to all those countries, institutions, government bodies and non-governmental organizations that have helped us and that continue to help us within the context of the efforts we are making to ensure the economic and social prosperity of our people.

Mankind is at a historic turning-point. A new world order is emerging. This new world must be freed from the current economic imbalances, ensure that there is justice for all peoples without distinction as to ethnic origin or religion, promote human rights, not selectively, but rather universally, and be based on a genuine consensus, which applies the same rules to everyone.

The United Nations, which embodies the unanimous will of all countries, has a paramount role to play in the current crucial phase. It must give direction to collective action and ensure that the will of the majority prevails over the will of a few States, no matter how powerful they may be.

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Peace, democracy and development are the goals that the United Nations set for itself in 1945. However, movement towards these goals has been hampered by the conflicts of the most powerful and the egoism of the richest.

Let us ensure that we achieve these goals. If we do so, we will then have established a fair and equitable world order that can elicit the enthusiastic support of everyone.

For its part, Mauritania, guided by our unwavering faith in the ideals of the Organization, will endeavour always to improve, strengthen and enhance the role of the United Nations as it works towards the achievement of its purposes and objectives.

Mr. COORE (Jamaica): On behalf of the Government and people of Jamaica I congratulate Ambassador Shihabi of Saudi Arabia on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session. I also wish to express my appreciation to his predecessor, the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Malta, for the able manner in which he presided over the forty-fifth session and for his efforts to streamline the work of the General Assembly.

We take very special pleasure in welcoming the seven new Member States of this Organization: the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. All these have now joined the family of nations. We are sure that they will make valuable contributions to the work of the United Nations and the strengthening of the world community.

Only a few days after this Assembly was privileged to hear an eloquent address from the first democratically elected President of Haiti, we were shocked to hear of his ouster by a section of the Haitian Army which now calls itself the government of Haiti. The universal condemnation and repudiation of this dastardly act gives the assurance that this interruption of the democratic process in Haiti will be only temporary. It is gratifying to note that the countries of this hemisphere have reacted immediately, not merely with condemnation but with action.

The Organization of American States, at a meeting of the Foreign Ministers held in Washington last night, which was addressed by President Aristide himself, has declared an absolute commitment to taking whatever steps are necessary to assist the Haitian people in restoring the

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legitimate Government of President Aristide, and in the shortest possible time. My country, Jamaica, along with our Caribbean Community partners, pledges full support to the steps it is proposed to take in the next few days, and we call on the whole international community to join us in ensuring that the democratic and human rights of the Haitian people are speedily restored.

Our Secretary-General, Mr. Perez de Cuellar, is nearing the end of a dedicated and distinguished period of service to the United Nations. My Government takes this opportunity to express our admiration for the patient and persistent manner in which he has tackled a variety of complex and difficult issues and the contribution that he has made to enhancing the prestige and authority of the United Nations in its efforts to realize the noble principles of its Charter. He has earned and deserves profound appreciation and gratitude from us all.

The world his successor will confront is in many respects significantly different from the one in which our present Secretary-General began his stewardship. The cold war has ended. In consequence there is a suspension of ideological polarization and a lifting of the threat of a nuclear holocaust through super-Power confrontations, which were the two defining characteristics of the post-war era.

At long last the process of dismantling the arsenal of nuclear weapons has begun in a significant way. The announcement by President Bush of a number of unilateral actions to be taken by the United States in this regard will no doubt in due course be matched by corresponding actions on the part of the Soviet Union.

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The developing rapprochement between the super-Powers which has marked the closing years of the decade of the 1980s has strengthened the capacity of the United Nations to fulfil its peace-keeping role and has been conducive to the creation of an atmosphere that has enhanced the search for solutions in a number of troubled areas in the world.

One of the most dramatic consequences of this change in the world situation was the decisive and effective way in which the world community was able to react to the Gulf crisis brought on by the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq. It has also opened up a new window of opportunity for a lasting solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and there is now the very real possibility of a Middle East peace conference being convened in the near future. While no one underestimates the formidable difficulties that still stand in the way of a resolution of this situation, it is heartening to observe that there does appear to be at least a new willingness to look for fruitful compromises that will replace the destructive confrontations of the past.

On the African continent, the Government of Angola and UNITA have signed peace accords to end the civil war in that country. In South Africa the long-heralded winds of change have at last begun to blow with a force that we can now feel confident will in the foreseeable future totally demolish the system of apartheid. This year we welcomed the repeal of legislation that constituted the formal framework and the main pillars of that system. Progress is also being made in meeting the requirements of the United Nations Declaration on Apartheid adopted by consensus in December 1989. An agreement has been reached between the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and

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the South African authorities regarding the voluntary repatriation of South African refugees and political exiles.

President De Klerk has also proposed a programme of constitutional reform which, while still far from the ultimate objective of full representational democracy, at least provides a platform on which meaningful negotiations can be based. Some countries have responded to these developments by the lifting of sanctions against South Africa in varying degrees. It is our belief, however, that some of these steps are premature. It is the force of international pressure that has brought the South African regime to its present position of conciliation and reform. That pressure must continue to be maintained, albeit in a measured and graduated way, until the full objective of a genuinely democratic, non-racial South Africa is achieved.

In July of this year the Government and people of Jamaica were proud and honoured to welcome to our shores the distinguished, courageous and outstanding leader of the African National Congress, Nelson Mandela, and to be able to assure him personally of our continued support in his efforts to end apartheid through peaceful negotiations.

In the region to which my country belongs - Latin America and the Caribbean - there is a good deal on the current scene that we can view with a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction.

In Central America progress has been made in El Salvador towards the achievement of a political settlement. We welcome the broad agreement reached last week under the auspices of the United Nations between the Government of El Salvador and the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN), which constitutes a major breakthrough in the search for national reconciliation.

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We are particularly pleased to note that Guatemala has now formally recognized the sovereignty and independence of Belize and that the two Governments have now decided to establish full diplomatic relations and are continuing negotiations to achieve a full and final settlement of their dispute.

(Mr. Coore, Jamaica)

The major outstanding issue of concern in the political landscape of the region is, of course, the continuing posture of confrontation that exists between Cuba and the United States. This is one of the few remaining legacies of the cold war. While there is full appreciation of the deep-seated political and psychological barriers that stand in the way of their reconciliation, there is no doubt that the Governments and peoples of the region would welcome some movement on the part of both countries that could eventually lead to the full reintegration of Cuba into the family of nations of this hemisphere.

One of the striking features of recent developments in this hemisphere that augurs well for the future has been the rapidly increasing trend towards trade and economic integration. At the same time, the Enterprise for the Americas Initiative launched by the United States Administration signals a most welcome reaffirmation that the United States will not abandon its historic commitment to furthering the economic well-being of the region as a whole.

All these developments have understandably evoked the vision of a new world order based upon the universal acceptance of democratic forms of government, operating under the rule of law, guaranteeing full recognition of basic human rights and promoting the empowerment of the individual citizen within a liberalized economic system.

Even while holding fast to this vision of the future, however, we should not make the mistake of assuming that Utopia is at hand. In human affairs every advance towards new forms of political and economic organizations, however meritorious in itself, inevitably brings new challenges and unforeseen problems.

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Already we have seen that the dissolution of the monolithic, economic and political organization of Central and Eastern Europe has unleashed long dormant antagonistic forces of nationalist and ethnic rivalry. It has also demolished a structure of economic organization that, however imperfectly and unsatisfactorily, did function to produce a mutually supportive trading regime. With its disappearance the threat of economic chaos leading to social and political instability in that whole region is a danger that the world community cannot ignore.

Neither can we ignore the current internal struggle in Yugoslavia. Still less can the international community be indifferent to the Herculean task facing the Soviet Union as it seeks to redefine the relationship between the several republics to the central authority and to each other. Whatever result emerges from this is bound to have a profound effect on a vast range of international issues and on the nature and character of the emerging new world order.

In a formal sense, of course, these could be regarded as internal problems. Clearly however, their resolution will have profound external and international repercussions. This indicates a possible need in the world community as a whole, and this Organization in particular, to rethink the boundaries if not indeed the whole concept of the rigid dichotomy between internal and international issues and to seek to define ways in which the international community, without impairing the principle of sovereignty, and the right to self-determination, can assist countries to find solutions to those internal problems which, if left unattended, can have grave consequences for us all.

(Mr. Coore, Jamaica)

To the challenges that arise from the disappearance of the old landmarks that defined the bipolar world of the post-war era must, of course, be added the unfinished agenda of those issues that have been increasingly occupying the attention of this Organization. Foremost among these, of course, are the economic issues of development and trade; the increasingly uneven distribution of world production; the phenomenon of increasing impoverishment of large sections of the planet in both relative and absolute terms when compared with the increasing affluence of a much smaller fraction of the world's peoples. This constitutes the most outstanding legacy of the decade just ended which needs to be urgently addressed.

This unhappy divergence is taking place, not only between nations, but within nations, and even the most affluent are beginning to be aware of the real consequences for political stability and social order if this trend is not halted and reversed.

In my own region - Latin America and the Caribbean - despite the efforts made by Governments to adopt and promote appropriate macro-economic policies and to undertake far-reaching measures of structural adjustment, it is nevertheless true that economic and social progress continues to be elusive.

The debt crisis which is now entering its second decade has for many countries in this hemisphere become a permanent debilitating condition denying the possibility of economic growth and threatening the collapse of social services. It is, of course, true that some important steps have been taken by a number of creditor countries in relation to bilateral debt and, in addition, a number of debt strategies to deal with commercial debt have achieved some measure of success. However, in order to achieve any lasting progress, sustained international action is required on an even more focused and global scale. In particular the international financial institutions need to rethink

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their own policies in relation to the restructuring and refinancing of debts owed them, particularly by those developing countries with fragile economies that find themselves in the anachronistic position of being net contributors to those institutions.

In addition, these financial institutions, which have for a variety of reasons acquired a controlling power over the internal economic policies of a number of developing countries, need to keep under continual review the relevance and efficacy of their traditional prescriptions. These prescriptions, if not applied with flexibility and imagination and with close attention to the political realities of each country, can beccme a part of the problem rather than a part of the solution.

International cooperation in the promotion and encouragement of human rights is an abiding principle of the Charter. This Organization has relentlessly pursued these goals by seeking out and correcting violations wherever they are deemed to occur and has achieved marked success in many areas.

It is therefore appropriate that the General Assembly will convene a World Conference on Human Rights in 1993 to review and assess the work of the Organization in this field. This Conference provides an opportune occasion for renewal of the standards and the aspirations which are of fundamental importance to achieving a more humane world based on equality and justice.

The support of the international community should not, however, be confined to civil and political rights, important though these are, but should instead be extended to include those economic, social and cultural rights that in the final analysis give meaning and content to political democracy and individual freedom. In practical terms this implies recognition that social

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betterment and a more equitable distribution of the fruits of the productive process must go hand in hand with economic growth. Indeed, experience has shown that sustainable economic development requires the increasing participation at increasing levels of skill and commitment of the individual men and women of society in the productive process. This will not be forthcoming without an adequate response to the social needs of education, health care, decent housing conditions, as well as a perception that the wealth of the society is being shared in an equitable manner.

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Jamaica is seeking to establish these conditions in its strategy for the nation's future growth. Our national five-year development plan, 1990-1995 states:

"We must start by putting the human being at the centre of our concern. The building of our human capital is an overriding priority."

We therefore strongly support all efforts to ensure that social issues have a prominent place in all programmes of international cooperation between States and within the United Nations itself.

The illicit production of and trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances constitutes a continued and menacing social, economic and health threat worldwide.

Jamaica welcomes and appreciates the establishment of the new United Nations drug control programme which was achieved earlier this year. This development will enable the United Nations to act more effectively as the main focus for international drug abuse control, as is envisaged in the Global Programme of Action adopted by the General Assembly. It is also an important step towards enhancing coordination and coherence in the international anti-drug programmes overseen by the United Nations, and also in the provision of broader assistance to individual countries.

It is Jamaica's unwavering intention, as has been repeatedly stated, to continue to utilize all available resources and to devote its full and united efforts nationally, bilaterally, regionally and in the international arena to attain the agreed and necessary objective of the total eradication of the drug menace.

Yet another challenge facing the world community is the task of ensuring that our development policies in the developing countries and the production of an ever-increasing range of the artifacts of affluent societies are

(Mr. Coore, Jamaica)

consistent with the goals of global environmental security and are ecologically sustainable. On the one hand the demands of sheer survival in poverty-stricken countries do result in unacceptable environmental destruction while on the other hand high levels of production and consumption in the industrialized countries generate the largest part of the current emission of pollutants and devour, without adequate provision for replacement, the existing raw material resources of the planet. The 1992 Conference on Environment and Development for which we are now preparing will provide us with a timely opportunity to demonstrate the political commitment to forge a new global partnership designed to protect and preserve the natural environment. Such a partnership must take into account the varying levels of responsibilities, the differing economic capacities and needs and in some cases the particular vulnerabilities that characterize the various countries of the world.

If the developing countries are to participate effectively in this global endeavour, then the need must be recognized to provide financial and technological resources, to support environmental conservation programmes on terms that these countries can afford. It is worth mentioning, for example, that it has already been conservatively estimated by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean that approximately $US 10 billion in financing will be needed annually to make that region's development environmentally sustainable.

In this context I should also like to make special mention of the need to complete the ratification of the 1982 Convention on the Law of the Sea. That Convention provides a universal legal framework for the rational management of marine resources, for their conservation and for the fruits of their exploitation to be distributed and enjoyed in a just and equitable manner.

(Mr. Coore, Jamaica)

We urge the Governments which have not yet done so to ratify the Convention so that we can begin to establish a new regime of cooperation in the management of this important area of our planet.

As we reflect upon the demands that will be placed upon this Organization in the years ahead to deal with both new and old challenges in an effective way it seems clear that the most urgent question facing the new Secretary-General will be whether the structure and operational modalities of the Organization, fashioned as they were in a different era, are adequate to provide the dynamic leadership and confidence in that leadership that the world community needs and requires at this time.

The Rio Group of Latin American and Caribbean countries has put forward in a document submitted in the Assembly, some ideas, proposals and suggestions for improving the capabilities of the United Nations and, as a member of that Group, I commend these proposals to the attention of the world community.

The Secretary-General himself in his report to the Assembly has put us further in his debt by providing an insightful analysis of the current state of the Organization with a very frank identification of those areas that are in need of strengthening and reform. Without attempting to discuss the detailed recommendations in these documents, I may say that two very clear guidelines emerge. If the Organization is to have the moral authority to contribute significantly to the range of political, economic and social issues that confront the world community, its decision-making processes must be both transparent and reflective of the will of the majority of its Members. If the democratic principle is, as we believe, the right prescription for individual nations, then it should also be recognized as the objective to be sought in the international arena subject always of course to the right of individual nations to protect their vital interests and their national security. This

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requires us to ensure that the General Assembly is the forum where issues of global interest are not only discussed but are decided and implemented. That is the first guideline.

The second is that in order for decisions to be implemented effectively, the central Secretariat and the specialized agencies must be adequately funded and appropriately empowered. In so far as the Secretary-General's office itself is concerned, member States should be prepared to support and encourage the dynamic political role for that office envisaged by Article 99 of the Charter.

Members can be assured that my country will give its full support to all constructive proposals for strengthening and enhancing the work of this great Organization, which represents mankind's best hope for a world of peace, orderly economic progress and social justice.

Mr. KATOPOLA (Malawi): On behalf of the Malawi delegation, I am pleased to congratulate Ambassador Shihabi of Saudi Arabia and the other members of the bureau on their election. We wish them success in guiding the deliberations of this forty-sixth session of the General Assembly. My delegation likewise congratulates Mr. Guido de Marco on having presided over the deliberations of the forty-fifth session so well.

(Mr. Katopola, Malawi)

Like others before us, we welcome the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania as new Members of the Organization. Their admission serves to reaffirm continuing international faith in the United Nations as the primary agency for the promotion and strengthening of worldwide cooperation and understanding. We are confident that the new Members will contribute to enabling the United Nations to fulfil its cherished purposes.

We note with particular interest that the admission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea has finally come about as a result of mutual agreement between the two on the issues. We are encouraged by this because we in Malawi have always maintained that no unilateral or externally imposed solution to conflicts or differences between any peoples can be permanent or universally acceptable. We hope, therefore, that their admission to membership in the United Nations will give encouragement to the two Koreas in their continuing search for solutions to the remaining issues dividing their peninsula.

We have noted with satisfaction that, notwithstanding the frightening jolt sustained from the Persian Gulf crisis and its aftermath, the trend towards greater international understanding and cooperation, especially in the political sphere, has continued during the past 12 months. As a result, the prospects for international peace and security, at least in the long term, would also appear to have improved.

In this context we welcome the signing in July of the strategic arms reduction Treaty (START) between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. We also welcome the decision by the People's

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Republic of China to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

The past 12 months have witnessed greater efforts in the search for solutions to regional conflicts. More of these have now been resolved. We congratulate all those who contributed to this welcome development, and we wish success for those continuing initiatives aimed at finding solutions to conflicts still outstanding. In this connection, Malawi looks forward to a successful outcome to the referendum to be carried out soon on the future of Western Sahara.

Meanwhile, we have warmly welcomed the ending at long last of the long, destructive fratricidal war in Angola. It is our sincere hope that the Angolan people will at last find the peace for which they have longed all these years. At the same time, we hope that the international community will give Angola all possible assistance in the enormous task of national reconstruction and development that now lies ahead.

Malawi considers it a matter for deep regret that progress in the peace process in Mozambique has not been as rapid as indications had led us to hope 12 months ago. However, we note with some encouragement that the Government of Mozambique and the Mozambique National Resistance are determined to pursue their negotiations towards the conclusion of a mutually acceptable settlement. We continue to hope for a successful conclusion to those negotiations, and Malawi is always willing to make its modest contribution towards that end.

As regards South Africa, we have followed very closely the developments there. Thus, we have welcomed the repeal in the middle of this year of the apartheid laws. We have also welcomed other measures taken by the authorities

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there in what would appear to be an earnest attempt to move more definitively towards the establishment of a just and equitable social, economic and political order.

Malawi sees those developments as marking a major turning-point in the political evolution of South Africa. However, we do not lose sight of the fact that the real objective has not yet been achieved and, indeed, much more still remains to be done before this is so.

A critical and delicate stage has now been reached in South Africa. We hope, therefore, that as all parties move to respond to the urgency of action now so clearly required, caution will be exercised to avoid any precipitate actions and decisions that are likely to hinder the realization of long-term national interests. We wish for collective leadership, pragmatism, patience and foresight as they prepare to face the most challenging phase in the process of political transformation upon which their country has now embarked.

The situation in the Middle East continues to be a source of great concern. However, we have followed with much encouragement some of the developments which have taken place in the region during the past few months.

We are pleased that the civil war that ravaged Lebanon is now over. We note that while peace remains tenuous there are strong signs of growing confidence about the future. We therefore join the people of Lebanon in looking forward to the return of permanent peace and security to that country and we also share their hope to gain full control over their own destiny, free from external threats or interference. Consequently, we welcomed the decision by the Government of Syria to withdraw its forces from Lebanon. We take this

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opportunity to echo the appeal for the withdrawal of all foreign elements, and for full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon.

With regard to the Arab-Israeli conflict we note that recent initiatives aimed at arranging a regional peace conference have given rise to fresh hope for the resolution of the issues that have divided the Middle East for over four decades.

As a firm believer in the philosophy of contact and dialogue as the best approach to resolving inter-State conflicts or differences, Malawi has always supported the idea of holding a conference on the Middle East. We therefore support and welcome the current initiatives, and we are pleased to note that for the first time all parties concerned have declared their acceptance of such a conference. In our view, for the proposed conference on the Middle East to be meaningful the following elements, which we consider essential, should be looked into thoroughly: first, all interested parties, especially those directly affected by the issues involved, should be properly represented; secondly, all representatives should be able to participate fully in the work of the conference; and, thirdly, the conference should address all the issues central to the Arab-Israeli conflict, taking account of all aspects of international law relevant to those issues.

We believe that only when all parties concerned are themselves able to make known their views on all the relevant issues directly can the conference arrive at an agreement to which all would truly and freely feel bound. Only such an agreement can be lasting and effective. It would be our hope, therefore, that as those concerned proceed with arranging for the regional peace conference on the Middle East, they will give due regard to these considerations.

(Mr. Katopola, Malawi)

The Malawi delegation regrets that the hopeful situation in the political sphere has not been matched by a similar trend in the economic field. The chasm between the developed countries of the North and the developing countries of the South has grown wider.

Parallel to the widening gap between the North and the South has been the ever-increasing inadequacy of financial resource flow. The servicing of debts presents yet another problem in the efforts to mobilize resources to support economic development. Indeed, the situation in a number of countries is so desperate that their viability has become questionable.

We have noted the various new initiatives which have emerged during the past year to redress the problems of the developing countries, especially the least developed countries. Unfortunately, many of these, like several previous ones, have tended to be largely palliative in nature and selective in application. Moreover, the non-economic conditionalities built into some of the initiatives have made them appear as no more than an attempt by the economically strong to control and manipulate the weaker economies.

In this connection, we should like to state that, notwithstanding the good intentions of our partners in development, that is, bilateral donors and the multilateral financial institutions, the tying of assistance to non-economic conditionalities does not yield the best results in terms of economic growth and development. In this regard, our experience in Malawi has been that where conditionalities are economic the economy responds positively; where they have been non-economic or unfeasible, the results have been adverse for the economy and the people of Malawi.

Thus, the Malawi delegation, while appreciating the good intentions of our partners in development, would like to use this forum to appeal to them

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not to disregard our comments on and objections to some of the conditions they may attach to their assistance.

The developing countries of the South desire to be self-reliant and not perpetually dependent on goodwill and charity from the North. In an increasingly interdependent world, they want to be able to contribute, as equal partners with the North, to global economic development.

In order to make such an economic order a reality, the South needs urgent and adequate assistance in building up sustainable economies. Currently, this would require the North to make further concessions on the debt burden facing the developing countries and give increased financial assistance, including the transfer of appropriate technology to the South. While these measures would stimulate industrial growth, support diversification and improve product quality, there is also an urgent need for an equitable international trading system in which commodities from the South will be assured of better access to the markets of the North and in which the South will be assured of a stable and profitable pricing system.

The International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade, adopted by this Assembly at its last session, provides a framework for such a system. The Declaration adopted by the Assembly at its eighteenth special session established the blueprint for a practical partnership between the North and the South, which could make this new order a rality.

In this context, therefore, we feel that the failure of the Uruguay Round to conclude its work - which was due to the reluctance of certain interests pertaining to the North to accept compromises on a number of key issues, all of which are of vital interest to the South - does not augur well for the realization of the goals of the latest International Development Strategy.

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Similarly disconcerting was the failure of the Assembly at its forty-fifth session to adopt the draft resolution on United Nations operational activities for development or the draft code of conduct for transnational corporations. These developments have given rise to doubts about the viability of partnership in development and have tended to confirm the suspicions aroused by the lack of success in the implementation of the United Nations Plan of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990. The Assembly will be considering later the report on its final review and appraisal.

My delegation notes with satisfaction the timely initiative of the United Nations on a matter which has in the past two years become another source of concern to the developing countries. I refer, of course, to the threat of marginalization of the developing countries as the aid-donor community has suddenly become enamoured of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

In this connection, we welcome the convening in July of this year in Geneva of the high-level meeting of the Economic and Social Council to consider this situation in the context of the impact of the recent evolution of East-West relations on the growth of the world economy, in particular on the economic growth and development of the developing countries, as well as on international economic cooperation.

The Malawi delegation fully supports the declaration of the Algiers Colloquium of May 1991, presented to the meeting in Geneva, and also the statement made at the same meeting by the Chairman of the Group of 77.

My delegation has taken careful note of the assurances given by the developed countries that economic assistance to the developing countries will in no way diminish as a result of assistance given to the newly democratic and market-economy States of Central and Eastern Europe.

(Mr. Katopola, Malawi)

It is our hope, therefore, that this session will give serious consideration to all these matters with a view to proposing ways in which genuine international economic cooperation can be made a reality. This is very important for international political stability and security because, as the Chairman of the Group of 77 stated at the high-level meeting in July:

"Without a fair and balanced global economic order ... the world will witness chaos and civil strife bred by poverty and political cynicism."

Malawi has followed with interest the preparatory work for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and looks forward to the "Earth Summit" to be held in Brazil in June of next year. Since this may be the only occasion for the General Assembly to review the preparatory work before the Conference convenes, we hope that the Assembly will use this opportunity to emphasize the need to ensure that the Conference will achieve lasting, practical results.

Before concluding, I wish, on behalf of the Malawi Government, to express appreciation for the assistance that Malawi continues to receive from the United Nations and its agencies. This contributes greatly to our social and economic development efforts.

(Mr. Katopola, Malawi)

On this occasion we especially want to express our sincere gratitude to the United Nations, to bilateral donors and other international agencies, for their timely and generous contributions which greatly facilitated the provision of emergency relief to the victims of the severe floods that affected several parts of our country early this year. Over 500 people perished in these floods while tens of thousands lost their homes and property, including their crops from this year's planting. The Government and people of Malawi are most grateful.

Finally, we understand that Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar may shortly be stepping down as Secretary-General. On behalf of the Government and people of Malawi, we applaud his successful stewardship of our Organization. No doubt history will better record his own personal contribution to the promotion of international peace and security during the past 10 years. We congratulate him on a job well done and wish him well in all his future endeavours.

Mr. MOCUMBI (Mozambique): Sir, you are presiding over this session at a very crucial time in the international arena. I should like to express my congratulations to you upon your election to the presidency and my full confidence that under your able guidance our deliberations will be crowned with success. To your predecessor, Mr. Guido de Marco, let me convey my deepest appreciation for his remarkable performance during the course of the last session.

My congratulations are also extended to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, for the wise manner in which he has presided over the destiny of our Organization in the search for solutions to political, economic and social problems around the world.

(Mr. Mocumbi, Mozambique)

We warmly welcome the admission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Latvia, and the Republic of Lithuania, into the family of the United Nations. Their presence among us reinforces the universal character of our Organization and stimulates the ideals of democracy, peace, justice and freedom embodied in the Charter.

Until very recently, the rifts between East and West had created a world characterized by a climate of tension, confrontation, mistrust and the psychosis of war in international relations. At present, however, we witness a world where the end of polarization and confrontation, as a result of ideological differences between the super-Powers, opens up excellent opportunities for the international community to join efforts in the search for adequate solutions to the many challenges still facing mankind.

This situation is reflected in the ever-increasing role of the United Nations and the earnest participation of the Organization in its efforts towards the consolidation of the climate of détente and dialogue prevailing at the present time.

We note with appreciation and renewed hope that the political understanding reached between the United States and the Soviet Union has already contributed, in a relatively short period of time, to a positive resolution of complex issues which for many years have been the bone of contention between the super-Powers - the very issues that had entailed negative and global repercussions in the international arena.

We are therefore convinced that this climate of understanding will contribute decisively to the exploration of new horizons in the search for

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solutions to the remaining international issues to which adequate responses are still lacking. We remain concerned with issues like the consolidation of international peace and security, the disarmament process, the external debt crisis and the question of the development and protection of the environment, the reinforcement and strengthening of democracy, the promotion of human rights, the phenomenon of refugees and displaced people, the combat against terrorism and illegal drug trafficking, among others.

The end of the East-West confrontation constitutes a good reason for celebration and reinvigoration for a generation which has lived facing the spectre of war. This achievement, however, is nothing but the first step on the long journey through the avenues of peace, cooperation, progress and prosperity, for which we all yearn. It is within this context that we follow with keen interest the ongoing efforts and initiatives towards the solution to several regional conflicts. In the Middle East, for instance, my Government encourages and supports the current initiatives for the convening of an international peace conference in the region. We also believe that similar efforts should be deployed towards finding an early solution to the conflicts in Western Sahara, Cambodia, Afghanistan, East Timor, and elsewhere where conflicts still prevail. The recent experience regarding the crisis in the Gulf demonstrated clearly that appropriate solutions to various problems affecting international peace and security in the world can be found.

The President of the Republic of Mozambique, Mr. Joaquim Alberto Chissano, said in his address to the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly last year that cooperation, solidarity and the emerging of a new consensus at the international level constitute the most eloquent examples of the universal dimension of our Organization. He went on to say:

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"It is our understanding that this new trend in international relations should not be an instrument for the management of selective crises, but a systematic policy to confront the countless challenges in the world ..." (A/45/PV.13, p. 53)

The end of the cold war opens up good prospects for the countries of the North and the South to work together on a common agenda focused on the resolution of the pressing issues which affect developing nations. Let us take advantage of the present political situation to work out adequate solutions to the problems of hunger, ignorance, poverty and misery, which constitute potential sources of conflict in the developing nations. Delaying further the resolution of these issues can undermine the efforts towards the democratization process currently under way in the developing world. It is our belief that one can hardly build a full democracy in a world in which 15 per cent of the population consumes 70 per cent of the total production, in a world where 1.5 billion people lack basic medical care and in which illiteracy levels are dramatically high, just to mention a few examples.

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We therefore concur with the Secretary-General's evaluation, contained in his last report on United Nations activities, that the revitalization of North-South dialogue has become more urgent than ever. It is our understanding that this dialogue must accord priority to the issue of external debt, the problems of the Uruguay Round and the question of the transfer of financial and technological resources to developing nations.

The degradation of the environment and the ecological system has merited increased attention on the part of the international community. International cooperation in the search for global measures and policies on the subject can guarantee effective solutions to the problems of environment preservation. We are confident and duly optimistic about the success of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, which is due to take place in Brazil in June 1992. We hope that this historic conference will establish the foundations for fruitful cooperation between nations in the search for adequate global solutions to the environmental problems that threaten the survival of mankind. We hope that the Conference will reveal common attitudes to the responsibility and capability of each State, as well as to the different economic issues arising from the environment question.

The winds of change in southern Africa begin to offer renewed hope for a future of peace, democracy, social justice and progress in the region. On this occasion we wish to salute the efforts that culminated in the signing, in Portugal on 31 May 1991, of the Angola Peace Accords. The signing of these Accords represents the end of a protracted conflict, which sowed death and destruction in Angola for 17 years.

The Republic of Mozambique - indeed, the entire international community - follows developments in South Africa with the utmost interest. The process of

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removing the pillars of apartheid brings with it an atmosphere of hope, and it represents a significant political development in the context of the creation of a democratic, united and non-racial society in South Africa. However, these developments have not yet been accompanied by similar measures leading to the creation of an appropriate climate for the free exercise of political activity in that country. In the interests of peace and harmony between all South Africans, we address a renewed appeal to the South African Government to undertake its responsibility to put an end to the violence, which has intensified in recent months.

In our view the National Peace Accord of 14 September 1991, signed by the Government and the main political organizations in the country, constitutes a valuable instrument aimed at securing the cessation of violence and the creation of appropriate conditions for the free exercise of political activity in South Africa. To this end, we urge the people of South Africa in general to exercise acute vigilance with a view to neutralizing the actions of forces still in favour of the perpetuation of the apartheid system as a means of protecting their privileges, to the detriment of the welfare and reconciliation of South African society as a whole.

The political stability of a democratic and non-racial society in South Africa is vital if peace, stability, progress and cooperation are to be secured in the region. Confidence-building measures and collective-security mechanisms must be deployed in order to prevent the resurgence of new conflicts in the region.

The southern African region has enormous economic potential, the potential to become a viable regional market in the near future, with the prospect of growing to be a strong partner in its trade relations with other

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regions.

The war in Mozambique continues to be a matter of great concern to my Government. For more than a decade Mozambique has known no peace. This is the result of a war that has been imposed on the country. Last year the President of the Republic of Mozambique had occasion to inform this Assembly of the beginning of direct negotiations in Rome between the Government and RENAMO. The end of violence, the establishment of peace and the normalization of life for all Mozambicans continue to be the Government's highest priority.

The Government agreed to engage in direct dialogue, convinced that the other side was ready to accept a minimum number of basic principles. It is against this background that seven rounds of negotiations have taken place since July 1990. The negotiation process has been difficult and sluggish. In a total of seven rounds, only a partial cease-fire agreement for the Beira and Limpopo corridors has been concluded. Nevertheless, in terms of the viability of this agreement, the Joint Verification Commission, created at the onset of this partial agreement and comprising eight countries, has already had the opportunity to denounce several violations perpetrated by RENAMO in those corridors. These violations constitute deliberate action aimed at violating the letter and the spirit of the agreement.

On the other hand, after 16 years of full independence in Mozamb'que, RENAMO seeks to question the legitimacy of the State, the Government and its institutions. In addition to its being absurd, this posture constitutes a clear demonstration that the negotiation process continues to be jeopardized by external interference and by interests other than those of the Mozambican people. The immediate cessation of this interference is called for.

Apart from that, RENAMO continues its indiscriminate crusade of massacres

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against defenceless people and its systematic destruction of the country's economic and social infrastructures. In spite of this negative behaviour, the Government will continue to exercise the necessary tolerance and responsibility and will work tirelessly to bring the war in Mozambique to an end. We are currently engaged in efforts to convene the eighth round of negotiations. There have been many postponements, at the request of the other side. Session after session, it has been the position of the Government that the negotiating parties should proceed to the discussion of substantive issues, including agreement on a general cease-fire. Actually, there is no reason today for continuation of the war and violence in Mozambique. Indeed, I must say that the efforts to restore peace in Mozambique find today an auspicious political atmosphere.

A new Constitution of the Republic entered into force last November. This embodies the principle of democratic pluralism and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of speech and association. In this context, the Political Parties Act establishes a legal platform for the activities of political parties. Meanwhile, we are preparing an electoral law that will govern both the legislative and the presidential elections planned for 1992. It gives me great pleasure to inform this Assembly that we shall welcome international observers to this process.

Having said this, I should like to reiterate that there is no justification whatsoever for the continuation of the war in Mozambique. In fact, all political forces in the country, including RENAMO, may pursue or defend their political objectives and strive to accede to power through the popular ballot, without having to resort to violence.

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In the economic field, the implementation of the programme of economic and social recovery suffers from the direct effects of unfavourable international conditions, which are reflected in the curtailment of economic relations with some of our traditional partners and in rising oil prices on the international market.

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This situation demanded that the Government adopt drastic austerity measures. However, despite the effects of the war and other economic constraints, economic growth levels continued to be positive in 1990, although last year's growth rate was relatively low compared to levels between 1987 and 1989, when annual growth averaged 5 per cent. The main constraint on economic and social development continues to be the acts of armed destabilization and the resulting social instability. As a result, thousands of peasants continue to be forced to abandon their places of origin and seek refuge in distant lands. This aggravates the emergency and hinders the development of the rural economy, which can no longer respond adequately to the economic incentives provided by the Government.

The Republic of Mozambique wishes to take this opportunity to express its high regard for, and gratitude to the international community for the emergency assistance and humanitarian aid it has accorded to the affected populations, both within and outside the country, in response to the appeals of the Government and of the Secretary-General. It is, however, a matter of fact that, even with the end of the war and the restoration of peace in Mozambique, the country's needs for humanitarian, technical and financial assistance will certainly increase.

The normalization of life, the social rehabilitation of children and adults traumatized by the war, the reconstruction and revitalization of the economy and social infrastructures, thus securing the development of the country, will require an enormous flow of financial and technical resources, requiring timely planning. At national level, the Government has already set up a special commission for the preparation and coordination of the plan for national reconstruction and resettlement and rehabilitation of displaced

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persons. For this, given the present situation, the country will also need to rely on the valuable assistance of the international community, which will be indispensable in our efforts for national reconstruction in the post-war period.

More than ever we trust in the ability and potential of the United Nations to serve as an ideal and privileged forum for the harmonization of the global interests of all nations of the world. We hope that the ongoing positive political change in international relations will be the catalyst for shaping a new world of peace, prosperity and cooperation among nations. As representatives of a peace-loving nation which has experienced the horrors of war, we look to the future with renewed optimism.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.